

REMARKS

Introduction

Claims 9, 11, and 13-16 are currently pending.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested based on the following.

Amendment to claims

As noted above, claim 9 has been amended to include the limitations of previously pending claims 10 and 12. Claims 10 and 12 have been herein cancelled. Moreover, claims 11, 15, and 16 have been amended to update proper dependence in view of amended claim 9. Therefore, the above-noted amendments are proper and do not add any new subject matter. As such, entry of the present amendments and examination is respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 9-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Patent No. JP 7266073 (hereinafter referred to as “JP”). Applicants respectfully submit that the present rejection is improper because JP fails to disclose all of the claimed limitations of claims 9, 11, and 13-16.

To anticipate a claim under 35 U.S.C. §102, a single prior art reference must identically disclose each and every claim feature. See Lindeman Machinenfabrik v. American Hoist and Derrick, 730 F.2d 1452, 1458 (Fed. Cir. 1984). If any claim feature is absent from a prior art reference, it cannot anticipate the claim. See Rowe v. Dror, 112 F.3d 473, 478 (Fed. Cir. 1997).

As illustrated in Fig. 4 of JP, a voltage source extends between a top surface 15 and a plate 6. A laser 4 cuts the material 1. Although, upon further inspection of Fig. 4, the top portion (15) coupled to a positive node of a current/voltage source (not numbered) and the plate (6) is coupled to a negative node of the current/voltage source. Moreover, the coupling of the plate (6) to the negative electrode is performed in conjunction with the permanent magnet (8) disposed under the plate (6), as illustrated in Fig. 5a.

Claim 9, as amended, recites that the current-voltage source is “interconnected between an electrically conductive workpiece and the electrode in such a way that the electric field is applied between the workpiece and the electrode, **wherein the workpiece and the electrode are interconnected in such a way that the workpiece is positively charged and the electrode is negatively charged.**” (emphasis added). The JP system, as illustrated in Fig. 4, discloses a completely different system having the reverse polarities affecting the laser

beam (4). More specifically, the completely different system of JP operates in a completely different manner using the magnet (8) below the plate (6) to produce a completely different result of an electrical field which is different from the claimed electrical field of claim 9.

In other words, claim 9 recites the workpiece being positively charged and JP discloses the plate being negatively charged. Moreover, claim 9 recites the electrode being negatively charged and JP discloses the top portion (15) being positively charged. As the polarity of the electrode and the workpiece and the electrode directly affect the laser drilling and laser erosion, the JP system is a completely different system as claimed in claim 9. Therefore, JP does not disclose all of the claimed limitations of claim 9.

Regarding claims 11 and 13-16 depend from claim 9. Applicants submit that these claims contain further patentable subject matter in view of claim 9 and are patentable for at least the reasons stated-above.

Regarding claims 10 and 12, it is submitted the present rejection is moot as these claims have been herein cancelled.

Furthermore, in support of the present rejection, the Examiner has supported the present rejection based on a review of figures 1-4 of JP. Should the Examiner maintain the present rejection, Applicants respectfully request a showing of where the specific limitations, as claimed in claims 9, 11, and 13-16 are explicitly disclosed, taught or suggested by JP. Or in the alternative, Applicants request withdrawal of the present rejection and passage of these claims to issuance.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submits that all of claims 9, 11 and 13-16 are allowable. Prompt reconsideration and allowance of the present application are therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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